

## A Woman of Science Scans Hollywood

Tribal Rites, Terrors, etc., of Colony Make Lively, Readable Volume

By Jay Carmody

Hortense Powdermaker has written a book on Hollywood and if it did no more than introduce an anthropologist named Hortense Powdermaker, this would be something.

One does not run across anthropologists named Hortense Powdermaker every day. In fact, they occur once a millennium and they obviously do not have to write books on Hollywood to attract attention.

This entrenchment with Miss Powdermaker's name implies no irreverence toward her achievement in "Hollywood, the Dream Factory." It grows out of the circumstance that until now the most titillating by-line in contemporary writing has been that of Clementine Paddleford, whose subject is food. Miss Paddleford may put it down as treachery if she will, but hereafter this correspondent shall be going around dreamily with Miss Powdermaker.

### It Makes a Readable Critical Volume

She is our girl as well as an anthropologist keen enough to find fascinating tribal rites right here at home. True, she served an anthropologist's formal apprenticeship in Melanesia—whose natives apparently were created for anthropological study—but she conserved her strength to accomplish her greatest work at home. This implies a sharp sense of the dramatic not to mention a nose for muck which no reporter could fail to admire.

What has come of this?

In three words, a readable book.

"Hollywood, the Dream Factory" is the work not only of a scientific mind but of a woman with an effective style. It probably will not become a best-seller on the non-fiction list, but it will be a more readable work than many which achieve this distinction. Miss Powdermaker is writing about the same people who dribble daily through several hundred Hollywood columns. What is more, she has a new angle, or perspective, on these glamorous creatures.

### Hollywood's Neurosis and You

It is a dramatic angle, too; namely, the effects of the movies and the movie people upon us millions of innocents exposed daily to both. By making a mass analysis of these occupants of her dream factory—their taboos, conflicts, frustrations, customs, etc.—Miss Powdermaker sounds a dramatic alert to them and their work.

As community case histories go, this is fascinating stuff. It left this reader with a feeling that Miss Powdermaker might find a lively sequel in Washington if she cared to come here to analyze the private lives of another group of public creatures. Our taboos, frustrations, conflicts and tribal rites are as good as Joan Crawford's and Darryl Zanuck's any day.

The contents which spill out of Miss Powdermaker's Hollywood dream factory are not new. They add up rather to an orderly display of a thousand fragmentary revelations made by other critics of the movie capital. Interest in them is intensified by an original point of view. This is illustrated in her reference to the sexual mores of the film colony, to single out a detail, the promiscuity which she found to exist as many have charged in the past.

### She Reports It Simply Doesn't Pay

Miss Powdermaker treats this not with the standard moral indignation of other writers. She observes with cold scientific objectivity that an ambitious girl is crazy if she thinks overgenerosity gets her anywhere.

This same aloofness toward moral judgment is what made one read Aldous Huxley with so much enthusiasm when you and he were younger.

Miss Powdermaker (whose name consumes a lot of newsprint) was clearly warmly welcomed in Hollywood. Its anxiety-ridden residents fairly flung themselves upon her anthropologist's couch, or whatever. Out of the "all" they told her, an anthropologist's method has made lively reading.

Money is the sturdiest root of the evil that besets Hollywood. Miss Powdermaker finds. It has split the community in half a dozen conflicting forces, producers who loathe writers, writers who despise actors, actors who regard every one as their natural enemies. None of these can get along with, or without, one another.

### Not a Typical Capital-Labor Quarrel

Miss Powdermaker sees this not as a traditional capital-labor conflict but as something more harrowing because the capital is, willy-nilly, more tyrannical, the labor more creative, sensitive, and subject to more acute neuroses.

She gives the individual case histories to show the effects of these intramural conflicts; telling the stories of Mr. Rough-and-Ready, Mr. Mediocre and a dozen others. Not all the characters in her book are thus masked behind labels. She names names. Bergman, Crosby, Rossellini and scores of others and on her typewriter they have connotations that are not to be found in the daily columns or in the fan magazines.

"Hollywood, the Dream Factory" is not an unsympathetic report on the communal misery. Its objectivity does not imply mercilessness. Miss Powdermaker's intimate contact with the intimate aspects of the movie colony's life left her aware that singular intelligence is at work here and there within the system. It has its normalities as well as its abnormalities and she does not close the door to the possibility that the former may begin to operate to the advantage of the glamorous tribe among whom she lived. And of whom she writes more interestingly than so many others.

## Steinbeck Gives Stage A Slow, Studious Play

By William Glover

NEW YORK. It is Steinbeck's determined use of rather stiff and staid prose that is an audience handicap unless you happen to be in the mood for things people might say but never do. The stylized dialogue is coupled with the switching scenes and some simple but again symbolic sets by Jo Mielziner to produce an overall effect of theatrical make-believe.

Besides Miss Bel Geddes, who registers effectively throughout the proceedings, and Smith, successful as the unfortunate spouse, the cast includes Howard Da Silva as the eternal friend and Martin Brooks, the other man in the obstetrical triangle.

Turning to what's ahead in the immediate future, on Tuesday a comedy, "The Curious Savage," sets up in the Martin Beck Theater, and on Thursday "The Day After Tomorrow" arrives at the Booth.

The box office situation on the shows which have reached town since the season formally launched just four weeks ago has at least three topflight sellouts and a healthy outlook for all the other survivors. One, "Southern Exposure," locked up last week end.

The arrivals which are packing them in include in top spot "Call Me Madam," with "Season in the Sun" and "Affairs of State" settled down to capacity trade. "Black Chiffon," which started out at a fast clip only to suspend in order to permit Star repertory to undergo surgery, reopens tomorrow night at the Forty-eighth Street Theater.

By then he has become the mouthpiece of Steinbeck.

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THEY HAVE TIME FOR COMEDY — Cyril Ritchard, Madge Elliott, John Emery and Ruth Matteson play the important roles in John Vanbrugh's "The Relapse or Virtue in Danger," which opens tomorrow night at the Gayety. The Restoration comedy, second play in the Theater Guild-American Theater Society subscription series, is scheduled for two weeks here.

## Horse Opera Trust-Buster

Reno Browne Says There's Room for a Cowgirl in Hollywood

By Jack Quinn

HOLLYWOOD. Reno Browne is a slender, gold-blond beauty who has spent the last three of her 26 years trying to convince Hollywood it has overlooked the cowgirl as a highly exploitable commodity.

From William S. Hart, Tom Mix and Buck Jones right down to Roy Rogers and Gene Autry, the horse opera has been a male monopoly. "The ranch owner's daughter traditionally ranks after the hero's horse in his affections."

Miss Browne, who has played the daughter of ranchers from the Pecos to Portland in a score of films, believes the time is right for a woman to invade the Hollywood range.

True, the screen has had its Belle Starrs and Calamity Janes. But they were played by actresses who went western only for those roles, then limped, saddle sore, back to the drawing room.

A gal willing to buckle on her guns, climb into the saddle and stay there could make a million rounding up the dogies, says Reno. "I hope it's me. If not me, it's bound to be some one else. The spot is there to be filled."

Why is she so sure?

### Girls Have Nothing.

Because little girls like to play Wild West, too.

"Cowboys," Reno says, "have become big business. They make more from commercial tie-ins—cap pistols, costumes, come books—than they earn from pictures. But it's all for little boys. The girls have nothing."

To tap this market, all that's necessary is a cowgirl star. That's where Reno comes in.

Having wound up her film contract with Monogram Studio, where for three years she was the kissless sweetheart of Johnny Mack Brown and Whip Wilson, she is preparing a series of television films which will find her not the boy friend—chasing the rustlers. The series is backed by a merchandising firm which hopes to capitalize on her popularity with the sagebrush set. If it clicks a movie version will be the next step.

Any other candidates for the job of western queen will have to hustle. For besides being willing—"I have no ambition to be in anything but westerns"—Reno is able.

A Glamour Horse, Too.

She's a crack rider. She can rope, shoot, even play a guitar. And in case it's ever required, Reno says she's practicing knife throwing and cracking a bull whip. As all Hollywood cowhands must, she has a glamour horse, Major, \$6,000 worth of prancing Palomino. Her closets contain some 20 gaudy cowgirl outfits for parade and rodeo appearances. She has a fan club of 5,000.

Relaxing in her living room in the brushy Hollywood hills, Miss Browne said she got into the cowboy business by chance.

Born Ruth Josephine Clarke, the daughter of a wealthy Reno (Nev.) attorney, she came to filmland "on speculation," after graduation from the University of Nevada.

"I wanted to be a dramatic actress. I'd studied ballet. So I spent a year at the Pasadena Playhouse. Then I hired an agent. When I told him I had learned to ride on a Nevada ranch, he wasted no time. The next thing I knew I was performing in an 'eight-day wonder' at Monogram."

That was three years ago. Since then she has galloped through more than 20 flyweight "oaters," always playing second fiddle to the hero.

"They wouldn't even let me ride Major. He would have drawn attention from the star."

Will the fans accept heroics from a woman?



NOMINATES HERSELF—Reno Browne thinks there's gold in a cowgirl Hollywood hills for the theater, too, and she also hopes she is the girl for the job. —Wide World Photo.

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## It's the Public That Makes Hit Tunes

By the Associated Press

NEW YORK. The little man named Irving Berlin hunched back in his chair to explain how you write tunes that get whistled and sung into the folk music of a nation.

"Nobody writes popular songs," he says with what sounds like oversimplification. "Popular songs are songs that become popular. That's all there is to it. Schubert's 'Serenade' and 'Pagliacci' are popular music in just the same way as any other songs that strike a chord in the people. When it fills a need of the people, when it strikes that chord, never mind whether it's a commercial success. Then it is popular music and maybe it becomes folk music."

No More Wars.

Berlin leans forward to tap a forefinger on the desk: "If you could hit on a tune that strikes the same responsive chord in every one in all the world, there would be no wars. Music is the greatest force that draws people together."

Right now Berlin is resting up from the rigors of creating the music for Broadway's new success, "Call Me Madam." He thinks it is Ethel Merman's "greatest show," but the music?

"Of course, I'm grateful to the critics who said it is one of my best scores. But no one can tell everything about a score the first time they hear it. I say, let's wait a year and then we'll know whether it is music the people want."

Her No. 1 Fan.

Miss Browne, who lives alone and likes it, said she devotes most of her spare time to her fan club. When she receives a request for a picture, she sends back with it a request for a photograph of the fan. These she files, along with his name, age, hobbies and the name of his dog or cat.

The club has a quarterly magazine and chapters in every country outside the iron curtain. Its expenses are borne by the founder, Reno's father, who also bank-rolled her house, private plane, automobiles and lavish wardrobe. Next to his daughter he is most interested in seeing Reno Browne become "queen of the westerns."

"Dad is my No. 1 fan," she said.

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## 'Good-By, Gregory,' Says Granger Fan

And Others, Too, Will Swoon for New British Star, Columnist Predicts

By Sheila Graham

HOLLYWOOD. At the preview of "King Solomon's Mines," I sat next to a critic's wife. After five minutes of watching Stewart Granger, the new star, she exclaimed: "Good-by, Gregory Peck!" Don't get the lady wrong—she loves Gregory. But Stewart is something new in masculine pulchritude. And a lot of women, millions of them, in fact, will swoon for him.

The best part of being a lady columnist in Hollywood is that when you fall for a movie hero, you can meet him for an interview. So this gal makes an appointment with Granger in his \$40-a-day suite at the Beverly Hills Hotel. And this is what ensued:

"Did you fly back from New York?" Stew has been in the big city to impress the press for the premiere of his picture.

"I'll tell you what it is, darling," says Granger, whom I am meeting for the first time. "I've flown a hundred thousand miles in one year. I came back by train because I had enough time in the air."

Wants Those Dollars.

"You know, I went back to Africa because when we were making the picture there I didn't have any private time for hunting. This time, I got lion and buffalo. I told the hunter, 'I want to get close enough to an elephant to take a photograph.' We got close to elephants and, among other things, to a lion."

Granger, now looking for a home near the beach, plans permanent residence in California. "I won't go back officially to England for three years," he said. "Otherwise they could take away my dollars." Stew's contract with Metro is for a straight four years, at the pretty salary of \$4,500 a week. "Unless I go back to Metro, to make a picture, I stay here."

"Are you going to marry Jean Simmons?" I ask.

"Yes, we are—but she is under contract to Arthur Rank for the next year and a half. That means she lives in England. I have my contract here at Metro. Jean was 17½ when I met her." At that time Granger was separated but still married. He has two children by his previous wife.

Just a Coincidence.

"Did you plan the meeting with Jean in New York?" I asked the Briton.

"Believe it or not, that was a coincidence. Paramount had its premiere of 'Trio.' Jean is one of the stars. They asked her to come over from England. Metro sent me to New York for 'King Solomon's Mines.' If Jean hadn't been there, I'd have fought against going to New York. Now we're both hoping that Paramount will tell Jean, 'You worked hard—we're going to give you a six-week holiday.' If they do, she'll spend it in Hollywood. They

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might, you know." (P. S.—They did; for two weeks instead of six.) "We've been asked about our marriage plans on an average of three times a week," Granger continued. "Maybe if we hadn't been asked so often, we'd have decided sooner. Jean is now 22. She's old enough to make up her mind. But I didn't want her to be influenced by public opinion."

"How are you feeling now?" I inquire. Stew picked up a mysterious malady in Africa, something like malaria, only worse.

But He Looks Fine.

"Still have it," he tells me, "only not so badly. I got sick during the shooting of the picture and stayed sick after it. Even here, when we did some extra scenes in Death Valley, I had to be rushed to the hospital. A beautiful ambulance arrived at 10 at night to drive me back to Los Angeles. I got here at 6 in the morning. I had a temperature of 103. But, strangely, I felt wonderful! We stopped at a drive-in where it said, 'Here we make the best doughnuts in the world.' I was dying, but I ate a doughnut!"

Granger lost 16 pounds as a result of his illness—but he has gained some of it back now and looks fine . . . to my female eyes, anyway.

"Are you going to entertain and all that sort of thing?" I wondered, thinking of the big parties given by Errol Flynn, who is somewhat like Granger in type. "Finds / Judy Atracelye."

"I don't want to compete," replied Stew. "I just want to live quietly and save my money."

Whom does the handsome star consider the most attractive female? "My 4½-year-old daughter," he said quickly—adding: "Got you there, didn't I?"

"Well, then, who would you most like to have dinner with?" said I, determined. "Judy Garland," declared Granger. "She's the most attractive girl in Hollywood. She's beautiful; she has humor, femininity, personality and sex appeal."

"I admire Betty Hutton, too. It was awful, the first time I went out to her house to take her to dinner. I was trying to make a hit with her two children. I patted one little girl's head, and my nose started to bleed. Betty was sweet."

Metro is going to be sweet, too. They obviously expect Granger to bowl over the entire population. The pictures lined up for him read like Clark Gable's at his best—"Ivanhoe," "Scaramouche," "Robinson Crusoe" and his next, "Soldiers Three."

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